

**“Don’t forget from whence you came”**: What were the circumstances of Alexander Hamilton’s life that lead to him arriving in NYC in 1773? Find a credible online biography of Alexander Hamilton. Make notes next to the stanzas of the first song in the musical so you can share this knowledge in class on Monday.

“Alexander Hamilton”

How does a bastard, orphan, son of a whore and a Scotsman, dropped in the middle of a forgotten spot in the Caribbean by Providence impoverished in squalor grow up to be a hero and a scholar?

The Ten dollar founding father without a father  
got a lot farther by working a lot harder  
by being a lot smarter by being a self-starter  
by fourteen, they placed him in charge of a trading charter

And every day while slaves were being slaughtered and carted away  
across the waves he struggled and kept his guard up  
Inside he was longing for something to be a part of  
the brother was ready to beg steal borrow or barter

Then a hurricane came and devastation rained  
our man saw his future drip-dripping down the drain  
put a pencil to his temple connected it to his brain  
and he wrote his first refrain a testament to his pain

Well the word got around they said “this kid is insane, man”  
took up a collection just to send him to the mainland  
“Get your education don't forget from whence you came. And the world’s gonna know your name.  
What's your name, man?”

Alexander Hamilton.  
My name is Alexander Hamilton.  
And there's a million things I haven't done.  
But just you wait, just you, wait.

When he was 10, his father split  
Full of it, debt-ridden  
Two years later, see Alex and his mother, bed-ridden  
Half-dead, sittin' in their own sick, the scent thick  
And Alex got better but his mother went quick

Moved in with a cousin, the cousin committed suicide  
Left him with nothin' but ruined pride  
Something new inside  
A voice saying “Alex, you gotta fend for yourself”  
He started retreatin' and readin' every treatise on the shelf

There would've been nothin' left to do  
For someone less astute  
He would've been dead and destitute  
Without a cent of restitution  
Started workin', clerkin' for his late mother's landlord  
Tradin' sugar cane and rum and other things he can't afford

Scannin' for every book he can get his hands on  
Plannin' for the future, see him now as he stands on  
The bow of a ship headed for a new land  
In New York you can be a new man (x4) In New York (New York) Just you wait (x3)

Alexander Hamilton  
We are waiting in the wings for you  
You could never back down  
You never learned to take your time  
Alexander Hamilton  
America sings for you  
Will they know what you overcame  
Will they know you rewrote the game  
The world will never be the same, oh

The ship is in the harbor now  
See if you can spot him  
Another immigrant comin' up from the bottom  
His enemies destroyed his rep, America forgot him

We, fought with him  
Me, I died for him  
Me, I trusted him  
Me, I loved him  
And me, I'm the damn fool that shot him  
There's a million things I haven't done, but just you wait  
Whats ya name man?  
ALEXANDER HAMILTON

<https://wosu.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/ham16.soc.ushis.immigrant/hamiltons-america-an-immigrants-story/>